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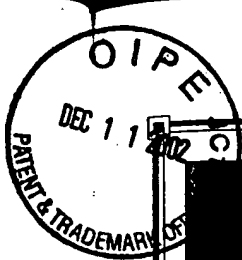
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Pioneer slot machine manufacturer, inventor and operator, Charles August Fey (1862-1944) was an intimate participant in the first half century of the industry. It was just a few years after the introduction of slots in San Francisco that Fey built his first machine, the HORSESHOE (p. 39). A year later after inventing his next machine, the 4-11-44 (p. 40) he terminated an existing partnership in the electrical supply business to devote full-time to developing slot machines.

The Man and The Machine



FEY 1899
LIBERTY BELL

Completed in 1899, Charles Fey's LIBERTY BELL was the forerunner of more than a million bell slot machines which would be manufactured over the next half century. The very name "bell" became the generic term for virtually all three-reel slot machines. Built of sheet metal reinforced by a brass frame and soldered and riveted together, this machine was slightly larger than the existing poker card machines and resembled them in case and design. The four card suit symbols, plus horseshoes and stars, were already employed on contemporary HORSESHOES machines; to these Fey added the bell symbol which earned the highest pay of all, 20 coins.